



198 Park Road, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
West Hartford, CT 06119  
(860) 231-8842  
[www.EnvironmentConnecticut.org](http://www.EnvironmentConnecticut.org)

Written Testimony of Christopher Phelps, Environment Connecticut Program Director  
Before the Connecticut General Assembly Environment Committee  
Friday, March 12, 2010

Supporting HB 5419, An Act Concerning Farms, Food And Jobs.

Senator Meyer, Representative Roy, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony supporting HB 5419. Environment Connecticut is a statewide member supported, non-profit environmental advocacy organization. In 2010, our top legislative priorities are those measures which can benefit Connecticut's environment *and* support job growth. HB 5419 is legislation that would support growth in the original "green job" sector – farming.

The farm job training and infrastructure grant program established in section 1 of HB 5419 would leverage available federal funding to support programs that would expand Connecticut's agricultural workforce. Additionally, the Community Farms Program would also leverage federal funding to support the preservation of small farms in Connecticut. Small farms are a vital part of our state's heritage and culture as well as a source of jobs in our small towns. The preservation of small farms also helps prevent destructive sprawling development, preserving our state's natural landscape and wildlife habitat.

Environment Connecticut urges the committee to support HB 5419

Sincerely,

Christopher Phelps  
Program Director  
Environment Connecticut